

FUTURE OF WORK

FACILITATOR GUIDE

SESSION OVERVIEW

In this 45 to 60-minute session, students will identify and apply elements of change in the world of work to better inform their career decision-making.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

1. Identify three factors influencing the world of work: technology, global business and demographics
2. Apply these factors to selected occupations and forecast occupational growth
3. Identify and use research tools including the newspaper, information interviews, and government publications to support their understanding of the world of work and projected change

MATERIALS

Alberta Career and Industry Outlook, Alberta Employment and Immigration

Resource 1 – Anticipation Guide

Resource 2 – Brainstorming Activity

Resource 3 – Marking Rubric

Hand Out 1 – Information Interview

ACTIVITIES

Introduction and Anticipation Guide	10 Minutes
Lecture – Technology	10 Minutes
Lecture – Global Business	10 Minutes
Lecture – Demographics	10 Minutes
Small Group Activity	10 Minutes
Outline Information Interview Assignment	5 Minutes
Wrap Up	5 Minutes

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INTRODUCTION

This lesson is focused on identifying and incorporating change into our decision making about our life and work. There are several factors that change our work world, they include technology, global business and demographics. This lesson will examine these factors and resources that will help us to track change in order to make effective decisions. The key questions that students will be asked are:

- How will technology change the occupations I am considering?
- How will globalization change the occupations I am considering?
- How will the population change the occupations I am considering?

Use **Resource 1 – Anticipation Guide** to initiate discussion about the factors influencing the world of work. At the conclusion of the Anticipation Guide, introduce the concept that these elements of change in the world of work require that we increase our awareness to shape our career planning.

LECTURE - TECHNOLOGY

Imagine that technology had stopped evolving 25 years ago. There would be no desktop computers, no Internet, no cellular phones, no digital cable. How fast would information be available?

The speed of information flow that we currently enjoy creates a rapid pace of change in our work force. It demands that workers are increasingly agile and able to adapt to changing systems, products, services and procedures. It requires immediate and informal communication systems, like text messaging, to help us all keep up.

Ongoing education will be a critical element of everybody's future in order to keep pace with changing communication systems. Rapid change in operating systems and other computerized communications will demand retraining on a regular basis. Computer skills will become necessary for most occupations, and workers will have to keep up their training to keep pace with change.

Additionally, changes in technology create an emerging workforce that requires more and more post-secondary education. Examples like:

- Robotics
- Automation Technology
- Online Commerce
- Biotechnology

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It is important to examine technology like robotics and automation. These emerging areas of work may displace some existing occupations. For example, automated banking displaces traditional bank tellers. It is highly important to emphasize that work does not go away, but it does change. One of the persistent changes evident as a result of growth in robotics and automation is that repetitive, manual occupations are displaced by very highly skilled occupations, like:

- Engineers
- Biotechnologists
- Automation mechanics

Brainstorm with students other examples of automation and the subsequent work that may be changing as a result. This persistent change drives an overall increase in the demand for post-secondary education, like certificate, diploma, trades and degree programs.

Other advances in technology enable people to work from home and use data connections like the Internet to perform work. It creates an “anytime, anywhere” workplace. Imagine services that could be delivered from a home office, like:

- Desktop support
- Language, sound and video editing
- Writing
- Graphic arts

Brainstorm with students a few other areas of work that could be performed “online” from a home office.

LECTURE – GLOBAL BUSINESS

Technology has enabled business to operate around the world, and around the clock. This 24/7, global business world has drastically changed the way we all live and work. For example:

- 24-hour call center in Alberta that serves customers in the United States
- 24-hour help desk center in India that serves customers across North America

Time and distance have become less challenging obstacles as technology evolves and expands. Companies may expand business internationally to capture a broader base of consumers, and this “globalization” influences local business. For example:

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- When the United States closes its borders to Canadian beef, we become aware that we produce more than we consume; this makes us more vulnerable to change in the international market
- When China, with a population of 1 billion, embarks upon industrial expansion – the price of steel in Canada rises in response to the increased global demand
- Canada participates in several trade agreements like NAFTA and the FTAA in order to ensure global partnerships in business
- Local businesses increasingly demand second languages to improve service to a world-wide consumer group

Canada competes with other countries to provide goods and services worldwide. The level of competition is fierce, and Canadian companies must run very efficient operations to be successful. This need for efficiency has changed the typical structure of Canadian business, and provides some new work opportunities for individuals. For example:

- Work will be more often part time, temporary, casual and seasonal
- Increasing opportunities for contracting, consulting, and self-employment to perform projects for larger organizations
- Companies will typically have a smaller core staff, and rely on “outsourced” services

This will place increasing demands on Albertan workers to improve their skills in:

- Adaptability and self-marketing – workers can expect to change jobs more often and require the abilities to adapt their skills, create a marketable resume, research employment, conduct a job interview and negotiate a job offers (individuals can expect to experience an average of 17 employment transitions in their working lifetime – Government of Canada Policy Research Initiative, http://policyresearch.gc.ca/page.asp?pagenm=v8n3_art_10)
- Financial management – increased employment transitions coupled with increasing availability of non-traditional work and self-employment results in the need of each individual to ensure their own financial security

LECTURE – DEMOGRAPHY

(Adapted from Boom Bust and Echo 2000, David Foot)

Demography is the study of the population and its characteristics, and is helpful to predict changing consumer preferences and demand for products and services.

Canada’s largest population group is the **BABY BOOMERS**, born between 1946 and 1967 (Richard Worzel). This group comprises over 30% of the population and has the greatest consumer, political and cultural influence in the country.

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Imagine you are between the ages of 40 and 60. What are your needs and wants for:

- Housing
- Automobiles and Transportation
- Health Care
- Education
- Music and leisure activities
- Finance, legal and other professional services

We see growth in adult executive condominiums, RV and motorcycle sales, alternative health care, online learning to accommodate working students, reunion tours of classic bands, golf and increasing financial services programs. Each of these areas of growth is related to Canadian demographics. What other examples can you think of?

The next demographic group in Canada, born between 1967 and 1979, is the **BUST**. This is a very small group, and does not represent significant consumer demand. This group is characterized by a high childless rate, meaning that more families in this group have no children compared with other demographic groups. How will this affect:

- Education
- Leisure
- Consumer Trends

Another large and influential group in Canada is the **ECHO** generation. Born between 1979 and 1995, this group makes up about 25% of the Canadian population. They have a strong impact on consumer trends. How does this generation:

- Communicate
- Learn
- Travel
- Live

We have to use this information to predict consumer demand for goods and services.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Break students into groups of four or five. Assign each group either the **BABY BOOM** or **ECHO** as a demographic cohort. These two cohorts represent the bulk of existing consumer demand. Have the groups brainstorm what they **EXPECT** their demographic cohorts to demand over the next 10 years. It may be helpful to give the groups categories of information to think about. For example:

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Group A will enter the mind of a typical 50 year old Canadian BABY BOOMER. This typical BABY BOOMER is planning some purchases over the next 10 years. How will this person spend their money on the following products and services?

Travel:

Housing:

Music:

Technology:

Resource 2 – Brainstorming Activity is provided. Cut out along dashed lines and distribute to each group. Have groups brainstorm and document their findings. Comment on the accuracy and relevance of findings.

ASSIGNMENT – INFORMATION INTERVIEW

Keeping informed about trends and change is important. We may have to adapt and change our work and our life to accommodate these influences.

Brainstorm sources of information about trends. Top up student generated list with:

- News media including newspapers, radio, television news, Internet
- Industry publications
- Books
- Conferences and trade shows
- Education (formal and informal) and educators
- Career counselors
- Friends and family
- People working in the field

Distribute Alberta Career and Industry Outlook. Indicate that this is only one example of a print publication that may be helpful. Familiarize students with the three sections of the publication:

Page 4 – Trends Affecting Alberta's Occupations and Industries

Page 13 – Projected demanded: General employment trends

Page 23 – Alberta's Major Industries and Occupational Groups

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Career planners must use this information and compare to other information to get a more accurate picture of the future of work as they consider occupations for their own future. Another excellent research method is to conduct informational interviews with people we know and workers in the occupations we are considering. Outline the homework assignment. Students are to imagine themselves business consultants, making recommendations based on research to a group of international investors. These investors are looking for strong growth in an occupation or industry to determine their future investments. Students will use Alberta Career and Industry Outlook, conduct at least one information interview, and add at least one other resource to their research. They will generate a report detailing their research and making recommendations to the investors. Students may select their own occupations for approval by the teacher, or have an occupation assigned. Distribute **Handout 1 – Information Interview** and establish deadline for reports. For teachers seeking a list of occupations, consider *Alberta Careers Update 2004*, page 39, Part 3: Occupational Outlook for suggestions. **Resource 3 – Marking Rubric** is provided for this assignment.

WRAP UP

Now that we have examined technology, global business, and demography, it is important to incorporate this information to our career management. Career planners need to use their educated insight to identify realistic ways to adapt their occupations to make use of these changes. Effective career planners will use their insight to these changing labour market conditions to adapt and change their work all the time. While many people are tempted to follow “hot” occupations that are experiencing short term accelerated growth, it is much more balanced to understand and work with the forces changing the market place and adapt our work in response, making many small changes all the time to maintain up to date skills and training, understand the effects of globalization on our work and adapt to changing consumer preferences.

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RESOURCE 1 – ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Generate discussion by asking students first just to agree or disagree with the following statements with a show of thumbs up for agree and thumbs down for disagree. Invite discussion about each statement.

1. Education will never change because of technology. People will always go to school and learn in a group with teachers as they always have.
2. Computers will never be able to replace people in the trades.
3. People don't really need a second language in this work force.
4. Canada should focus its business on the United States.
5. Most people will get a pension plan from their employer and really don't need to worry about savings.
6. Many people will have one occupation for their adult life.
7. The aging population will put a tremendous amount of pressure on the health care system.
8. When people select an occupation, they needn't worry about the future. If it is prosperous now, it will be prosperous for a long time.

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RESOURCE 2 – BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY

Cut out the boxes and distribute to groups for brainstorming.

BABY BOOMERS	Financial Services Music Cosmetics
BABY BOOMERS	Travel and Tourism Housing Health Care
BABY BOOMERS	Clothing Technology Education
ECHO	Technology Clothing Travel and Tourism
ECHO	Communication Music Transportation
ECHO	Education Leisure Housing

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RESOURCE 3 – MARKING RUBRIC FOR INFORMATION INTERVIEW

CRITERIA

Purpose / Content

- explores trends in a current, accurate and insightful manner
- includes and references information from information interview
- summarizes research and makes recommendations to investors

Preparation and Planning

- interprets, organizes and combines information in creative, thoughtful and effective manner
- demonstrates creativity and initiative
- submits completed assignment within defined timelines

Resources and Materials

- use of resources are evident and cited appropriately
- responses to information interview are included

Writing Skills

- applies language conventions (eg. grammar, usage) correctly and adapts language skillfully for intended audience

RATING SCALE

Exceeds defined outcomes. Completes assignment in a thorough, creative and self-directed manner. Consolidates and applies information, resources, and materials efficiently, uniquely and with confidence. **5**

Meets defined outcomes. Completes assignment in a self-directed manner. Resources and materials are selected and used efficiently. **4**

Meets defined outcomes. Completes assignment in a supported manner. Resources and materials are selected and used efficiently. **3**

Meets defined outcomes. Responds to assignment. A limited range of resources, and materials are used. **2**

Does not meet defined outcomes. Attempts but does not complete assignment. A limited range of resources and materials are used. **1**

Does not attempt assignment. **0**

CRITERIA	RATING
Purpose / Content	5 - - 4 - - 3 - - 2 - - 1 - - 0
Preparation and Planning	5 - - 4 - - 3 - - 2 - - 1 - - 0
Use of Resources and Materials	5 - - 4 - - 3 - - 2 - - 1 - - 0
Writing Skills	5 - - 4 - - 3 - - 2 - - 1 - - 0

Student:

Comments:

Mark = _____ x 5 = _____ %



INFORMATION INTERVIEW – FUTURE OF WORK

Occupation:

1. How has technology changed your work over the past 10 years?
2. What changes do you expect in the next 10?
3. Do your products or parts come from another country?
4. Do you sell your product outside of Canada?
5. Do you compete with companies from outside of Canada?
6. If so, what advantages do they have?
7. How have your customers changed in the past 10 years?
8. If so, how have you changed your products or services to suit your customers' preferences?
9. What are the major influences changing your company, your products or services, or your work in general?

Generate a business report to a group of investors that clearly outlines the expected future performance of your assigned occupation. Your report should indicate your expectations about future growth or decline and the factors influencing its performance. Use your occupational interview, the newspaper, as well as Alberta Career and Industry Outlook and clearly indicate any other resources you use.

Assignment deadline: